

that France, now under the Emperor Napoleon, was inciting Spain to make trouble over the Louisiana Purchase, under the pretext of uncertainty as to the boundaries of the territory conveyed. Jefferson was for applying the old threat of a maritime alliance with England; but as Spain became more insolent on the southwestern frontier, he gave up the idea of coercing Napoleon, and determined to ask his mediation for purchasing the two Floridas from Spain. He did not dare to suggest the purchase to Congress formally, but sent to the House a batch of papers bearing on the matter, with an injunction of secrecy. John Randolph as chairman of the committee to which they were referred, learned the President's plan in an interview with him. He refused utterly to give it his sanction and, heading a few dissatisfied members, called the "Quids," broke from the government. He was supported by the Federalists for the rest of the session. In spite of this alliance, however, the President had a bill for the purchase forced through both Houses.

In the meantime the battle of Trafalgar had occurred October 21st, 1805, and Napoleon's sea power had been annihilated. Jefferson, nevertheless, continued to conciliate him, and had a bill passed prohibiting all trade with any port in the island of Santo Domingo over which the French flag did not fly. England now set herself to ruin the American carrying trade, which in the last few years had come to be almost the only means of communication between the nations of Europe and their colonial dependencies. She

established blockades of all French colonies, and later of the Straits of Dover and the English channel. All rights of neutrals were at an end. All previous decisions of the Admiralty Courts of England touching American shipping were reversed, and seizure and confiscation in all waters were the order of the day. The distress among the seafaring and commercial citizens of the Atlantic seaboard was extreme, and Congress was besieged with memorials, petitions, and exhortations for relief. Jefferson left the problem with Congress. After months of debate and uncertainty, Congress passed a Nonimportation Bill, forbidding the importation of certain articles from England and her dependencies, after November 15th, 1806,